

If you have two days to visit Florence you can take in a larger area. You can follow this route even in one day if you want to see something different, or if you have already spent a little time in the city. Not far from the train station of Santa Maria Novella, a masterpiece of 20th-century rationalist architecture, stands the basilica after which it is named.

1 Santa Maria Novella is the 13th-century church of the Dominican Order, with a fine façade in green and white marble. The Gothic interior is very beautiful, with numerous frescoes and masterpieces of Renaissance art. Attached to it is the **museum** of the same name.



Through narrow, picturesque alleys you reach Via Tornabuoni, the most fashionable shopping street in Florence, onto which backs the great **2 Palazzo Strozzi**. Commissioned from Benedetto da Maiano by Filippo Strozzi, it is one of the outstanding Renaissance buildings in the city. Its many fine rooms play host to a succession of art exhibitions,

while the ample courtyard of the Palace is always open.

Going on our way to **3 piazza della Repubblica** we find ourselves in what was the heart of Florence in Roman times, though the present piazza is the result of 19th-century town planning.

Returning to **Piazza del Duomo** and crossing it, straight ahead in Via Martelli you will soon find on your left another great Renaissance building, **4 Palazzo Medici Riccardi**. Cosimo “il Vecchio” de’ Medici commissioned it from Michelozzo in the mid-15th century. In fact the Medici left their mark on this whole area of the city. This Palazzo, which is the seat of the Province of Florence, is also a **museum** with splendidly decorated rooms and the wonderful **Chapel frescoed by Benozzo Gozzoli**. If you have no time for a visit you should at least take a look at the courtyard.

Two places with close ties to this Palace are the nearby **5 church of San Lorenzo and the Monastery of San Marco**. San Lorenzo was the family church of the Medici family. In its present form it was designed by Filippo Brunelleschi, and is a pure example of Renaissance architecture. The façade has remained unfinished, while the interior contains numerous

masterpieces of the art of painting. The church is surrounded by other notable places, such as the **Biblioteca Mediceo Laurenziana** and the **Medici Chapels**, including the **Old Sacristy**, another masterpiece by Michelangelo. The whole area is enlivened by day with a colourful market of clothing and accessories, which is very popular with tourists.



Returning to Palazzo Medici and continuing along Via Cavour you reach **6 piazza San Marco**, one side of which is occupied by the **church and monastery of San Marco**, which were an active intellectual centre in the city, with Cosimo il Vecchio investing generously in its enlargement and embellishment. The **Museum** housed in the monastery is remarkable for the Renaissance frescoes of Beato Angelico, while the **Library** is a masterwork of Michelozzo.

Just off Piazza San Marco is the **7 Galleria dell’Accademia**, one of

the most frequented of Florentine museums because it contains **Michelangelo’s celebrated David**. Yet the museum also houses other interesting sculptures by the same artist and a fine range of Tuscan paintings from the 13th to the 16th century.

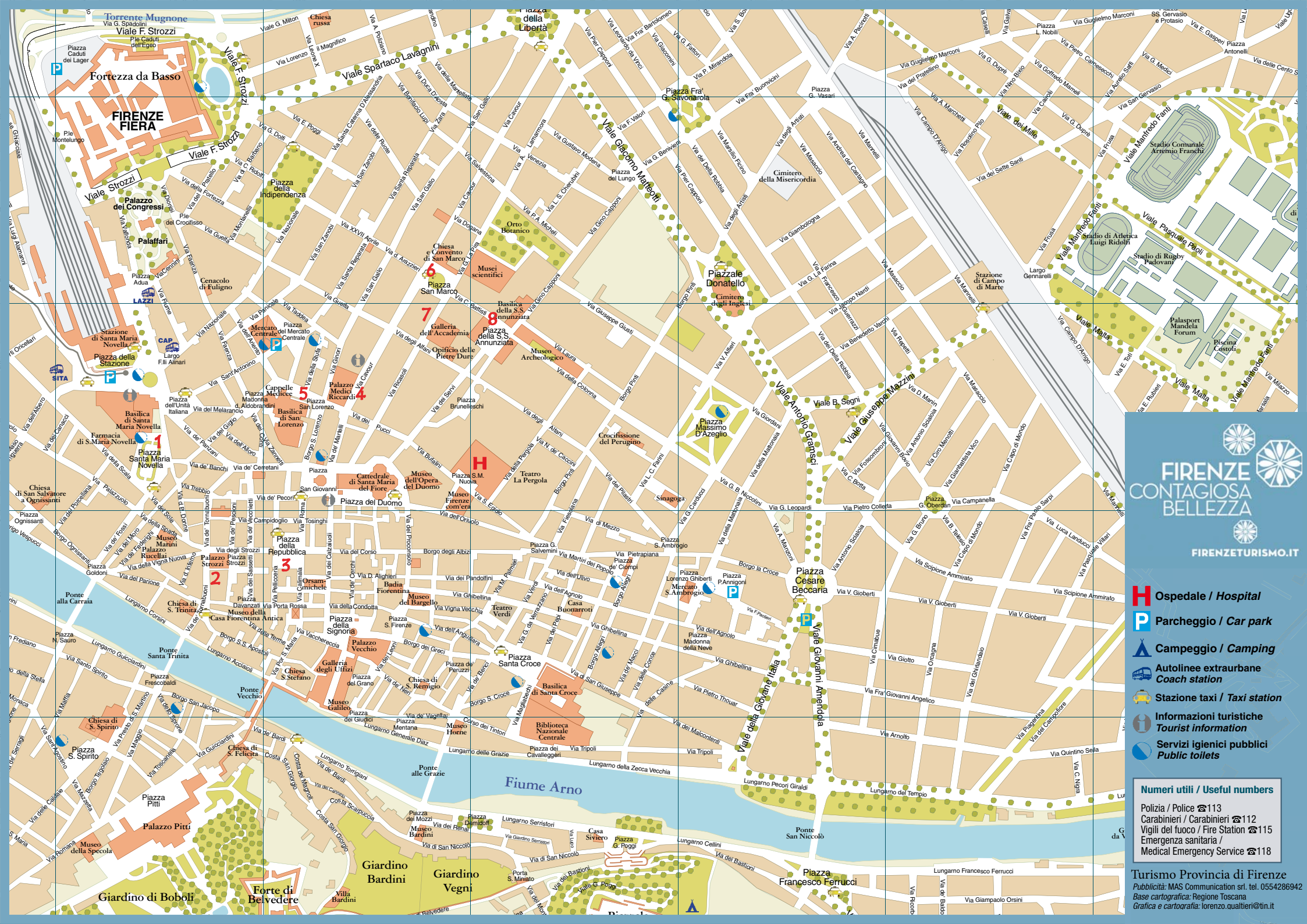
Continuing on our way we come to the **8 piazza Santissima Annunziata**, surrounded by building with porticos, the most important being the **Spedale degli Innocenti**, the work of Filippo Brunelleschi. Originally intended for the acceptance and care of abandoned children, as early as 1440 it contained a museum and has many rooms of great artistic interest. The **church of the Santissima Annunziata** was built in the mid 13th century for the Servite Order; the interior has frescoes by Andrea del Sarto, Franciabigio, Pontormo and Rosso Fiorentino.

To the left of the church, (at the corner of Via Capponi), is the entrance to the **Museo Archeologico**, with a vastly important collection of Etruscan, Roman and above all Egyptian findings. Your visit to the museum takes you also into the garden, in which Etruscan tombs have been reconstructed.



FLORENCE CITY MAP

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